

Claims

1. A method of supporting emergency calls in a mobile communications network, the method comprising:
  - a. receiving a network access from a user equipment;
  - b. selectively controlling access to the network in dependence on network access information; and
  - c. disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said receiving step includes receiving the network access information that comprises network area access information.
3. A method according to claim 1, further including the step of determining if said network access comprises an emergency call.
4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the step of determining if said network access is for an emergency call includes receiving an indication of the type of call.
5. A method according to claim 4, further including the step of receiving the indication of the type of network access from the user equipment or from the network.
6. A method according to claim 1, wherein said selectively controlling step includes selectively controlling the network which comprises an access network and a core network.
7. A method according to claim 6, wherein the steps of controlling and disabling the access to the network are performed in the access network.
8. A method according to claim 6, further comprising determining if said network access is an emergency call

in dependence on receipt of an indication of the type of network access from the core network.

9. A method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of activating the step of disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network, wherein said activating step activates on receipt of the indication of the type of network access being the emergency call.
10. A method according to claim 1, further comprising detecting a network access initiation, and, responsive thereto, disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network.
11. A method according to claim 10, wherein said disabling step includes disabling for a predetermined time period.
12. A method according to claim 10, further comprising the step of detecting establishment of a radio access bearer, and responsive thereto activating the step of disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.
13. A method according to claim 12, further comprising activating the step of disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network only for the emergency call network access associated with that radio access bearer.
14. A method according to claim 10, further comprising terminating said disabling step responsive to a control signal.
15. A method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of receiving the network access information from the core network.

16. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of detecting termination of an emergency call, and, responsive thereto, the step of enabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network.
17. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing the method in a 3GPP mobile communication system.
18. A computer program product including computer program code, the computer program code adapted to perform a method, the method comprising the steps of:
  - a. receiving a network access from a user equipment;
  - b. selectively controlling access to the network in dependence on network access information; and
  - c. disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.
19. A computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for supporting emergency calls in a mobile communications network, the computer program product adapted when executed on a computer to perform steps, the steps comprising:
  - receiving a network access from a user equipment;
  - selectively controlling access to the network according to network access information; and
  - disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network for an emergency call network access.
20. A network element for enabling emergency calls in a network, comprising:

- a. network access request receiving means for receiving a network access request from a user equipment;
  - b. selection means for selectively controlling network access for the user equipment in dependence on network access information; and
  - c. disabling means for disabling the selection means for an emergency call network access.
21. A network element according to claim 20, wherein the network access information is shared network area access information.
22. A network element according to claim 20, further comprising determining means for determining if said network access is an emergency call.
23. A network element according to claim 22, wherein the determining means includes receiving means for receiving an indication of a type of network access call.
24. A network element according to claim 23, wherein the indication of the type of network access is received from the user equipment or from the network.
25. A network element according to claim 20, wherein the network comprises an access network and a core network.
26. A network element according to claim 25, wherein the network element is in the access network.
27. A network element according to claim 24, wherein the determining means determines if said network access is the emergency call in dependence on receipt of the indication of the type of network access from the core network.

28. A network element according to claim 24, further including activating means for activating the disabling means responsive to receipt of the indication of the type of network access being the emergency call.
29. A network element according to claim 20, further comprising detecting means for detecting a network access initiation, and further disabling means responsive to said detecting means for disabling the step of selectively controlling access to the network.
30. A network element according to claim 29, further including timer means, wherein said further disabling means is activated for a predetermined time period determined by said timer means.
31. A network element according to claim 28, further comprising detecting means for detecting establishment of a radio access bearer, and activating means responsive thereto for activating the disabling means.
32. A network element according to claim 25, further comprising receiving means for receiving the network access information from the core network.
33. A network element according to claim 20, further comprising detection means for detecting termination of an emergency call, and enabling means responsive thereto for enabling the selection means.
34. A network element according to claim 26, wherein the network element is a radio network controller of a radio access network.
35. A communication system, the system comprising:  
an access network;  
a core network; and

at least one user equipment for connection to the core network through the access network,

wherein the access network comprises

- a. means for receiving a request for a network access from the user equipment,
- b. means for receiving network access information from the core network,
- c. means for selectively controlling access to the core network for the UE in dependence on said network access information,
- d. means for identifying a request for an emergency call, and
- e. means for disabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network responsive to identification of the emergency call.

36. The communication system according to claim 35, wherein the access network further includes means for identifying termination of the emergency call, and means for enabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network responsive to termination of the emergency call.

37. The communication system according to claim 35, wherein the means for identifying a request for the emergency call comprises input means for receiving an emergency call indicator from the user equipment.

38. The communication system according to claim 36, wherein the means for identifying a request for the emergency call comprises input means for receiving an emergency call indicator from the core network.

39. The communication system according to claim 38, wherein the access network further comprises means for

disabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network on initiation of a call.

40. The communication system according to claim 39, wherein said means for disabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network on initiation of the call is activated for a predetermined time period.

41. The communication system according to claim 39, further comprising detecting means for detecting establishment of a radio access bearer, wherein said means for disabling the means for selectively controlling access to the network on initiation of the call is activated until establishment of the radio access bearer.

42. The communications system according to claim 35, wherein the access network further includes:

detection means for detecting termination of the emergency call, and enabling means responsive thereto for enabling the selection means.

43. The communication system according to claim 35, further including means for receiving an indication of the emergency call on relocation of the call to the access network.

44. The communication system according to claim 35, further including means for transmitting an indication of the emergency call on relocation of the call to another access network.

45. The communication system of claim 35, further comprising a 3GPP mobile communication system.